

Meeting Date: March 8, 2007

Agenda Item No. 9

Agenda Item: Big Game: Deer, Elk, Pronghorn, Bear,
Mountain Lion (Action)

Approved by: _____

Prepared by: Brad Compton

Background:

Staff will present deer, elk, pronghorn, black bear, and mountain lion season recommendations for 2007/2008. A summary of recommended changes includes:

DEER

- Offer additional muzzleloader hunting opportunity for mule deer & white-tailed deer.
- Increase antlerless white-tailed deer harvest to address depredations, vehicle collisions, and urban deer problems; and to provide additional hunting opportunity.
- Establish a quality white-tailed deer hunting area in eastern Idaho.

ELK

- Offer additional muzzleloader hunting opportunity.
- Adjust controlled hunt permit levels in response to population changes.
- Adjust antlerless elk harvest to address depredation concerns.

PRONGHORN

- Offer additional muzzleloader hunting opportunity.
- Reduce harvest in Unit 44 to facilitate population growth.

BLACK BEAR

- Offer additional hunting opportunity in Units 43, 44, 45, 48, & 49.
- Reduce nonresident hound hunting opportunity in Units 10 & 12.

MOUNTAIN LION

- Adjust hunting opportunity in response to apparent population declines and young age structures in Panhandle & Clearwater regions.
- Reduce nonresident hound hunting opportunity in Units 10 & 12.
- Eliminate unnecessary female quota in Units 41 & 42.

MOTORIZED VEHICLE RULE

- Implement the motorized vehicle rule in Units 54, 55, & 57 to address high motorized travel route densities and hunter conflicts.

Policy issues:

Idaho Statute 36-104 authorizes the Commission to establish rules for the taking of wildlife consistent with state policy. Species management plans provide Commission direction for population and harvest management.

Public Involvement Process:

The recommendations have resulted from year-round public involvement and have been scoped internally and with the public through regional meetings and the website. Idaho Outfitters & Guides, US Forest Service, BLM, County Commissions, and Idaho Department of Parks & Recreation have also reviewed various recommendations.

Staff Recommendations:

Preliminary recommendations are attached. Final Department recommendations, after considering public input, will be provided during the presentation. Staff recommends Landowner Appreciation

Program hunts and permit levels be consistent with, and proportionate to, Commission adopted changes in regular controlled hunts and permit levels.

Justification:

Commission action required to adopt 2007/2008 hunting seasons for mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, pronghorn, black bear, and mountain lion.